

81458

RECEIVED
AUG 14 1989
REMD SECTION

Glen Curtis
U.S. E.P.A. Superfund Branch
726 Minnesota Ave.
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

Dear Mr. Curtis:

This letter is in regards to the Cherokee County Superfund Site - Galena Subsite. In 1983 the EPA added a 110 square mile portion of Cherokee county, Kansas to the National Priorities List. The lead and zinc mines located in southeast Kansas produced large amounts of ore but also created large amounts of tailings(chat). Much of the coarse tailings were reprocessed leaving finer tailings. These finer tailings could be used for various construction materials. The tailings have been used for concrete, fill, railroad ballast, and mainly road surface material in lieu of sized quarried limestone. The magnitude of the tailings use on road surfaces in southeast Kansas can easily be seen by driving any of the county roads. The tailings have been used for road surfacing in Cherokee, Crawford, Labette, and Bourbon counties. The numerous abandoned railroad lines have ballast that is almost 100 % chat which has a orange color to it due to the weathering of the sulfide minerals containing iron. These materials constitute a great hazard the entire area of southeast Kansas. The grinding action and "dusting" action that occurs when rubber tired vehicles travel on these county roads creates a tremendous health hazard. Children playing in yards next to the roads or riding bikes on these roads are at very high risk to metal uptake through their lungs. The dust lands on gardens and farm fields causing a metal loading in the soils and eventually metal uptake by the plants. I have not seen an EIS on this project area that discusses the hazards of airborne metals from the use of lead and zinc tailings for road surfaces in southeast Kansas. I'm glad to see that reclamation is being attempted in this area but hope that the monies will be spent wisely to abate health hazards affecting the largest population. If the EPA is planning on burying the tailings to alleviate airborne metal problems in the Galena area they better consider burying the tailings on the county roads. The main objectives of environmental reclamation are to identify the extent of the problem, set priorities, and realize the reclamation that can be achieved by limited resources.

Sincerely,



William L. Joseph
719 West 2nd St.
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762



S00082352
SUPERFUND RECORDS

